

Final Evaluation Report

“Rainbow of Hope” project

LEBANON



June – July 2015

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Funded by: United States Embassy in Beirut

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List of Acronyms

EA – Education Adviser

DM&E – Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation

LB – Lebanese

Pal – Palestinian

PC – Project Coordinator

RELO – Regional Education Liaison Officer

RoH – Rainbow of Hope

SYR – Syrian

1. Executive Summary

Summary of key findings

This report presents key findings as a result of Search for Common Ground's (SFCG) internal evaluation for the U.S. Embassy-funded program, "Rainbow of Hope" (RoH or the project). The project was implemented in 25 locations across Lebanon and provided over 1,200 Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian children between the ages of 6 and 11 years with the opportunity to develop and enhance their English literacy and/or conflict transformation skills, and notably, to overcome their pre-existing prejudices and develop a sense of mutual understanding, empathy, and ultimately, friendship with each other. The final evaluation yielded key findings in the following thematic areas: English classes, recreational activities, partnerships, and the final events.

In the English classes, the evaluation underscored key takeaways about the teachers' skills and adaptability. First, throughout the project, teachers demonstrated an increased confidence in their capacity to apply the English curriculum jointly with conflict transformation principles. They also demonstrated a high level of caring for their students, an ability to adapt to the distinct needs of their students, and learned to apply a variety of instructional methods to fit different situations.

For the students in the classes, the evaluation revealed that the older children were more interactive and responsive than the younger children, which is an expected result given the cognitive differences that exist between students with an age variation of up to five years. Throughout the project, considerable effort was also spent on facilitating student attendance and retaining students throughout the course. Challenges to student retention included: accommodating the study schedules of both the Lebanese and Syrian children, losing Syrian children to a UNHCR-funded formal educational initiative, and a temporary pause in the classes due to cold weather and snow blocking roads in the Bekaa Valley.

From a pedagogical perspective, students' learning capacities increased throughout the project, as did their sense of ownership, pride, and knowledge of new English vocabulary, with an average increase of 28.7% in their ability to speak English. Moreover, students also improved their understanding of the concepts of empathy, acceptance, non-violent communication skills, and seeing past backgrounds and differences in nationality, socio-economic status, etc. Throughout the project, 93% of the students were reported having positive interactions with children from different nationalities.

For the recreational activities, the evaluation tools utilized a quantitative Likert scale to assess improvement in the children's interactions, which the animators completed in their monthly reports. While the Bekaa centers had higher levels of tension reported by some animators between Lebanese and Syrian children, the Bekaa centers also had the greatest overall improvement in the quality of children's interactions throughout the project. This also reflects the changing environment between Lebanese and Syrians, as the Bekaa Valley has the highest concentration of refugees in the country, exacerbating tensions between Lebanese and Syrians further throughout the duration of the project. The children also improved their ability to resolve conflicts peacefully, by learning to talk them through and to understand the other side's perspective. Furthermore, animators in the recreational activities also reported increased confidence to promote conflict transformation skills in their work, increasing from 53% initially to 87% after being trained.

To successfully implement the project, SFCG worked closely with several partners to operate the centers in various regions, and coordinate the project logistics. Overall, SFCG experienced mixed results working with the

partners. While some partners were excellent communicators, coordinators, and established clear expectations for teachers and animators, SFCG experienced administrative challenges working with some other partners, who were not as communicative or organized. This resulted in a series of tangible recommendations for future work with partners.

Finally, the evaluation covered the project's three final events in each region, which were culminating events that provided a safe space for children to showcase what they have learned and enjoy activities and games with each other. The project's three final events in each region were viewed as successes, providing a unique opportunity to celebrate the children's achievements throughout the course, engage parents and families in their progress, and to also highlight the work



of the teachers and animators. Beyond this, they were also visible events that united communities in a safe space for children to play, highlighting the importance of the project overall. This helped further reinforce the positive relationships between the Lebanese and Syrian children, which also had effects on participating family members. Parents in attendance at the event expressed a strong sense of pride in their children's accomplishments.

Summary of Recommendations

The final evaluation enabled SFCG to reflect upon the project's design, implementation, and assess the results of the project's challenges to develop concrete recommendations for enhancing the project in the future. Through the evaluation, these recommendations encompass the following themes: teachers and animators capacity building, teacher recommendations, English curriculum, educational material, attendance and retention of students, parental engagement, recreational activities, and partnerships and the implementation of the sessions.

First, in the area of capacity building for teachers, SFCG saw the need to better equip teachers with skills to promote acceptance of differences and anger management. Feedback from the teachers highlighted future areas of capacity support that would be helpful, including: classroom management, child protection, teaching in multicultural settings, learning different teaching methods, and teaching students with special learning needs. Furthermore, SFCG recommends further capacity building in teaching literacy and reading skills and hiring an expert on conflict transformation in the schools to support teachers.

The evaluation also focused on assessing teaching quality, available resources to teachers, and curricular enhancements. Within this, the evaluation developed recommendations for the English curriculum by assessing the quality, relevance, and appropriateness of the 18 books used throughout the project. The evaluation also

consisted of specific recommendations for teachers, based on teachers who demonstrated flexibility, innovation, and creativity to meet students' varying needs and report on their progress. Moreover, the evaluation gathered feedback from the teachers on the educational materials they used, and which materials would be helpful in the future.

Two major areas of engagement were focused on for the English classes: attendance and retention of students, and parental involvement in the project. In the area of attendance and retention, SFCG recommends that the number of English classes be reduced, and the time of the classes increased; that class sizes to be limited to 20 students to ensure that students all receive the necessary attention and interaction with the teacher; and that an attendance policy be implemented to ensure students are present and engaged. While the project's budget did not plan for extra activities to engage parents, throughout the project, SFCG realized the critical value of doing so, and worked with the teachers to brainstorm ways to better engage parents in their children's learning processes. To further address this, SFCG recommends that in future projects, regular meetings be held for both parents and students outside of the classroom.

For the recreational activities, SFCG recommends that activities be held outside, when possible; that similarly to the English classes, the class size is reduced to ensure maximum interaction between the animators and the students; and that students recruited for the activities stay throughout the course of the program.

Finally, the evaluation highlighted takeaways for the RoH project's partnerships and on the approach to implementation of the English-language and recreational sessions. In this area, SFCG recommends reducing the number of centers to 15 overall from 25, taking a series of steps to ensure more thorough financial, monitoring and evaluation of the project, and on starting to plan the RoH final events early in collaboration with teachers and animators.

2. Project Background and Context

As approximately 1,200,000 Syrian refugees are registered with UNHCR, while estimates place the total number of Syrians in Lebanon at 2 million, Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita in the world today (one in four residents in Lebanon is a refugee). Unlike Syria's other neighbors, Lebanon has not established refugee camps for those fleeing violence in Syria. Instead, refugees are living in host communities, swelling the size of Lebanon's rural communities and cities. Most of these host communities were already among Lebanon's most fragile towns and villages plagued with poor government services and diminished socio-economic opportunities. The Lebanese government does not have the resources nor the institutional ability to provide for these communities as needed, much less with the growing number of refugees.

More than half of the refugee population is below 18 and, confronted with major difficulties to enroll in any type of education, four out of five Syrian children who fled the war to Lebanon are out of school. Moreover, the few children who get the chance to attend school often drop out because the Lebanese curriculum is delivered either in French or in English, while in Syria it was solely in Arabic.

In this context, the U.S. Embassy in Beirut approached Search for Common Ground to implement the RoH project which presents the following complementary objectives: to support education and English-language programs in Lebanon, provide psycho-social services to Syrian refugee children, promote social stability, and support ongoing conflict transformation efforts within Lebanon and between Lebanese and their Syrian guests. It also aimed at further supporting civic and democratic values among Lebanese and Syrian youth as both societies are working to establish democratic systems at different stages during and post-conflict.

As part of its societal approach to strengthen social stability by bringing together Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees around common projects, from November 2014 to July 2015, SFCG Lebanon implemented the Rainbow of Hope project in 25 locations across the country. For six months, around 625 Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian children attended together English classes five days per week. Moreover, they attended recreational activities on the weekends together with an additional 625 children.



The program focused on teaching basic and intermediate English language skills and conflict transformation through learning, play and creativity. The program further aimed to combat child labor and provide incentives to Syrian refugee families to keep their children in an educational setting through the incentive of English language learning. It also provided constructive channels to mitigate growing tensions between Syrian and Lebanese youth and their families in increasingly struggling host

communities. By providing English classes during the afternoons in addition to recreational activities on the weekends, it also lessened the strain of child care on Lebanese and Syrian families.

The curriculum included after-school English classes and weekend modules on conflict transformation, sports and arts and crafts. The English program featured language games, music and activities elaborating on short stories. The short stories incorporated conflict transformation, cooperation, and community building as unifying themes. Arts and crafts focused on creating visuals that make an English-rich environment (e.g. posters that illustrate vocabulary and students’ writing). Through English language training, the program taught values supporting diversity, acceptance, and empathy. The youth participated in topically focused discussions in Arabic and incorporated English to learn ways to resolve differences through active listening, compromise, and non-violent methods.

The RoH project has the overall objective of **bridging gaps between Lebanese and Syrian children, aged 6-11, through informal educational channels to strengthen social cohesion in 25 communities in Lebanon.**

The specific objectives (SO) are:

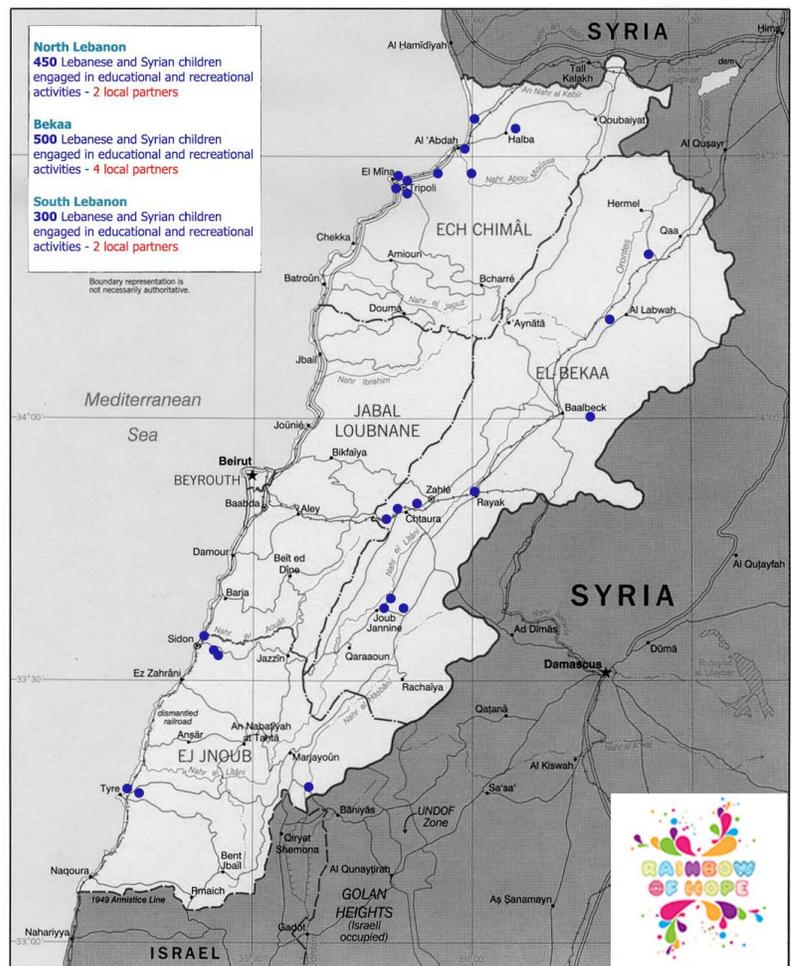
- SO 1. Lebanese and Syrian children aged 6-11 develop respectful and empathetic relationships with one another
- SO 2. Syrian and Lebanese teachers and animators actively use respectively the English curriculum and the recreational activities in order to promote non-violent conflict transformation and acceptance of the other among their pupils

Selection of Centers

The center locations were identified in October 2014 based on the following criteria¹:

- 1) **Vulnerability** (concentration of Syrian refugees in relation to the local Lebanese population and the poverty level of local communities);
- 2) Communities already targeted by SFCG with other social cohesion projects to ensure a **societal approach**; and
- 3) **Viable and reliable local partners** and infrastructures to conduct the activities.

Geographical Coverage of the Rainbow of Hope



¹ The list of the centers and their location can be found in the appendixes

Selection of Partners

Search for Common Ground worked either with local partners who already worked on the previous Rainbow of Hope (implemented by another NGO) or with its existing partners in the locations added to the project because of SFCG's presence in these areas.

For the project, SFCG partnered with the following local organizations which assisted with the logistics of everyday activities and ensured a smooth implementation. The partners reported to SFCG on a monthly basis and were in regular contact with the PC. The contracts, the budgets, and the scope of work were signed in November 2014 with all partners.

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| 1) Al-Hadatha | → | (North - Akkar) 5 clubs – 1 focal point |
| 2) Utopia | → | (North - Tripoli) 4 clubs – 1 focal point |
| 3) Sada Al Bekaa | → | (C/W Bekaa) 3 clubs – 1 focal point |
| 4) Salam | → | (C/W Bekaa and South Lebanon) 6 clubs – 3 focal points |
| 5) Chajar W Bachar | → | (Saida) 2 clubs – 1 focal point |
| 6) USpeak | → | (North Bekaa) 2 clubs – 2 focal points |
| 7) Nabad | → | (Central Bekaa) 1 club – 1 focal point |

Selection and Capacity Building of Teachers and Animators

SFCG began recruitment in November 2014 using means such as the Lebanese website daleel-madani.org/jobs to recruit 25 teachers, and its partners' networks to recruit 50 animators.

The 25 teachers were selected after a round of interviews conducted by SFCG Education Adviser, the U.S. Embassy Education Adviser and the Regional Education Liaison Officer (RELO).

Distribution of teachers and animators by nationality

Nationality	Number of teachers	Number of animators
Lebanese	16	47
Syrian	4	1
Palestinian	4	2
United Arab Emirates (UAE)	1	0

Development and Capacity Building of Teachers

SFCG offered a series of capacity building trainings to prepare the teachers and animators to complete their responsibilities effectively in their field of focus. While the teachers went through five days of trainings and one Refresher Day, the animators underwent one three-day long training and one Refresher Day.

The first training was provided to the teachers selected from across the country. This training aimed to introduce the teachers to the overall goals of the project and to the English teaching modules. Additionally, SFCG provided teachers with basic conflict transformation skills, and tools to better manage the classroom,

address tensions and deal with conflicts in a non-adversarial way. The training was conducted by SFCG Education Advisor and an external Peace Education expert.

The second teacher training was conducted by the RELO (Regional Education Liaison Officer) of the U.S. Embassy and by a SFCG consultant. The sessions with the RELO were primarily focused on writing book profiles and preparing a weekly lesson plan. The SFCG Education Advisor presented interactive activities that can be conducted by the teachers through the different phases of teaching a story. The conflict transformation training mainly focused on the identification of conflict in the classroom and how to integrate conflict transformation in the English clubs.

Additionally, SFCG organized a one day refresher for the teachers focusing on child protection and new educational tools. It aimed at using new creative tools to advocate conflict transformation and to bring a child's perspective/point of view into light through a better understanding of the different learning styles and children's needs. Furthermore, the 25 teachers were coached throughout the project to strengthen their ability to teach English while bringing changes in attitude and behavior among their pupils and creating a common sense of belonging to the group.

Development and Capacity Building of Animators

The animators went through a three-day training aiming to equip them with further techniques to be used in their animation sessions. The objectives of this training were two-fold: first, to introduce conflict transformation in the recreational activities, and second, to help animators deal with conflicts among children. The training used the 'learn by doing' method, and provided the animators with the opportunity to create their own activities to be used in their animation sessions. It included inventing a new activity, and transforming an activity they already used to promote the key values and messages embodied by the RoH project.

Furthermore, SFCG organized a one-day refresher, for the animators, on child protection and behavioral problems in children. It aimed at using new creative tools to embed conflict transformation concepts and bring a child's perspective into light.

Project implementation

The partners scouted their area for children aged 6 to 11 years, and recruited 625 Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian participants for the English sessions. An additional 625 children were invited to join the weekend recreational/animation sessions.

English sessions

The English curriculum (based on a list of books provided by the U.S. Embassy and tailored by the Education Adviser)¹ has been developed by the SFCG Education Adviser (with the support of the Regional Education Liaison Officer from the U.S. Embassy in Amman) in order for the kids to learn English alongside with key conflict transformation concepts such as understanding and accepting differences, empathy, respect, etc. Twenty-five English books featuring themes of conflict transformation, cooperation, and community building were selected.

¹ The list of books/stories can be found in the Annex section.

The English sessions were held in 25 clubs, across the country, five days a week, for one hour per day. The sessions featured language, games, music, storytelling, and activities elaborating the stories. The short stories incorporated conflict transformation, cooperation, and community building as unifying themes. Arts and crafts focused on creating visuals that make an English-rich environment (e.g. posters that illustrate vocabulary and students' writing). Through English language training, much like the English Access Microscholarship program,¹ the project taught values supporting diversity, acceptance, and democracy. The children participated in topically focused discussions in Arabic and incorporated English to learn ways to resolve differences. To support this approach, "Kelso's Choice" was added to the curriculum as an effective conflict management skills program² supported by an animation CD to teach basic skills, in English, to the children such as compromise and active listening through the dialogue of two frogs. This included the children listening to the conversation and voting for the right decision or action that the frog should take to solve the different conflictual situations.

Recreational Activities

Recreational Activities were held in the same locations as the English sessions, however they were held one day a week, on the weekend, for four hours. Each club had two animators working together to plan a number of entertaining activities revolving around themes such as conflict transformation, equality, and diversity.

Final Events

In June 2015, SFCG held three final events for the Rainbow of Hope project. These events were an opportunity for Syrian and Lebanese children and their parents, from the 25 locations, to celebrate the end of the project and to reflect on the progress and achievements of the children through the project's English language curriculum and recreational activities.

	Students	Parents	Animators - Teachers	Volunteers
South Final Event	159	80	20	5
North Final Event	180	40	20	5
Bekaa Final Event	161	0	18	5
Total	500	120	58	15

¹ <http://www.amideast.org/lebanon/english/english-access-microscholarship-program>

² <http://kelsoschoice.com/the-program/about-kelsos-choice/>

3. Methodology

a. Target groups and sampling

English Sessions

Search for Common Ground's DM&E Coordinator, in collaboration with SFCG's Education Advisor, developed various monitoring tools to assess the project's achievements. SFCG provided the teachers with an observation sheet to be filled four times during the project duration (December 2014, January 2015, March 2015 and May 2015), to assess the improvement level of the students from a pedagogical, as well as, behavioral perspective. The teachers were also provided with an attendance sheet to complete on a daily basis to assess the demographics and average attendance of the sessions plus a "session plan" prepared and evaluated by the teachers for each story. Moreover, the Project Coordinator and the Education Advisor conducted weekly field visits to the classes and wrote field visit reports based on their observation and assessment of the sessions.

At the very end, before the sessions ended, the Education Advisor visited Ter Debba center and conducted filmed interviews with the teacher and eight students to reflect on the impact the project had on the participants. Similar interviews were conducted with some of the participants and their parents, in addition to assessing the children's interaction with one another at the three Final Events. A final evaluation survey¹ has also been completed by the teachers reflecting their perspective, challenges and recommendations.

Recreational Activities

The animators were also provided with tools to assess the progress of their sessions. Like the teachers, they were given an attendance sheet to complete during each weekend session to assess the demographics and average attendance of the sessions. Moreover, they were asked to complete a monthly report.² The report served as guidance on the level of behavioral improvement of the children in conflict transformation and accepting each other, the challenges and success stories, as well as assessing the animators' skills.

At the end of the project, the Project Coordinator conducted phone interviews with a random sample of 10 animators to further gather evaluation data from the animation sessions.

After gathering the documentations, both the Project Coordinator and the Education Advisor entered the Data into Excel and analyzed the findings into the report.

b. Challenges

As no budget was available for the final evaluation, SFCG conducted the evaluation internally, which limited its scope. Moreover, the PC and the EA faced a number of challenges conducting the final evaluation of the project. These challenges mainly arose due to missing reporting forms, and the difficulty of communicating with some focal points, teachers, and animators in order to assemble and collect the forms.

¹ The survey questionnaire can be found in the Annex section.

² The monthly report template can be found in the Annex section.

Data for English Sessions

SFCG hired 25 teachers, however, by the end of the project, only 21 remained due to administrative challenges and existing time commitments the teachers had.

Regarding the monitoring data, the teachers sent their observation and attendance sheets more regularly than the animators, and only five out of the 21 teachers did not regularly send it. However, the EA did face limited challenges receiving the final observation and attendance sheet from the teachers. After several weeks of calling, emailing, and messaging on the WhatsApp group, she received the number of responses needed to complete the analysis and evaluation. There was a bigger gap of missing forms from the Bekaa region than any other region, especially from Salam-Bekaa and Uspeak. We also did not receive the forms needed from the Salam South office.

The EA then emailed the teachers a survey with 28 questions to evaluate their experience with the project. She followed-up with each teacher to ensure that they received the email and explained the document and the importance of filling it. However, nine out of 21 teachers did not complete the form.

Moreover, the project had a gap of one and a half months during which time a new EA was being recruited, which led to the Project Coordinator assuming the role and duties of the EA for that period. During this period, and due to the large number of clubs, it was challenging to follow up with all the teachers and animators for missing reports. After a discussion with the DM&E Coordinator, it was decided to sample the findings based on the first baseline questions and the final evaluation questions, the field visit reports, the observation of the EA during the preparation and on the day of the final events, the interviews with the teachers, and the Facebook group that has been created to help the teachers. Additionally, the evaluation was based on the PC and EA's follow-up and monitoring of the project's challenges and achievements.

Data for Recreational Activities

Similarly to the teachers, the PC faced some difficulties contacting focal points and animators to inquire about the missing reports and attendance sheets. Only five animators sent their reports regularly throughout the project implementation, while nine sent them occasionally, and eleven sent them rarely. After several failed attempts to receive the documents from the partners (trying to reach them by phone and through emails) and not getting a response, the PC and DM&E Coordinator agreed to sample the findings using the first month and last month of the project reporting. This strategy helped the team assess the behavioral and performance changes of the children, as well as, the competence improvement of the animators. The attendance sheets, on the other hand, were received more frequently, with 17 centers sending these regularly, while only eight rarely sent them.

Partners

In terms of monitoring, the partners were mainly responsible for collecting and sharing the reports and attendance sheets from their animators with SFCG. The SFCG team faced some challenges collecting the data from two of the partners, namely Salam and Uspeak. Only one club from each of the partners' clubs (8 clubs in total) sent their evaluation forms, Taanayel with Salam and Ras Baalbek with Uspeak. While Uspeak demonstrated an effort to communicate and gather the documents at the end of the project, Salam showed little to no effort to assist with the matter. There were no open lines of communication with Salam, as the focal points were unresponsive to both their emails and repeated phone calls.

4. Findings and Analysis

RoH provided over 600 participants with the opportunity to acquire basic English literacy and conflict transformation skills. Moreover, it has created job opportunities for members of the community, including teachers, animators, and drivers, among these. In the beginning of the project, there were acceptance issues especially from the Lebanese children toward the Syrian children (i.e. some Lebanese refused to sit next to Syrians), but with the teachers and animators' commitment and the support of the stories and their themes and the specific animation skills, the children started to accept and appreciate the differences between them, and they felt integrated in one group.

The parents of the children also greatly appreciated the improvement of their children – both in terms of English language ability and in overall character – during these six months. In some places, they came to the center and expressed their happiness regarding their children's ability to use English words now. While initially, the teachers struggled with the different pre-existing knowledge of English between Lebanese and Syrian students, after six months, the students were able to sing songs and present short scenes from the books in English: *“The most important thing is that he loves attending this class; he is more familiar with English language than his brothers who attend regular classes in a public school.”*¹

a. English Classes

Teachers' skills

The project logic included capacity building for teachers to allow them to use the English curriculum to teach English to a heterogeneous group while also fostering conflict transformation principles and promoting social cohesion in the classroom. The initial training's results showed an increase from 63% to 96% in teachers' confidence in their capacity to use the English curriculum together with activities that can help promote conflict transformation and acceptance of others.

Throughout the project, the teachers utilized various interactive methods including illustrations, drawings and acting out depending on the needs and circumstances of each class: *“My way of teaching has changed completely. In all my classes, I was using active learning techniques, where students were the center of the teaching learning process. In my class, students were from different levels and ages so it was necessary to take into consideration the individual differences among students. Group work was one of the most important teaching techniques I used.”*²



1 Interview with the mother of a Syrian student – Saïda, South Lebanon

2 Teachers Final Evaluation Survey – Miyeh w Miyeh, South Lebanon

For exercises conducted prior to reading the short stories, the teachers used one or more types of the following strategies: watching the story trailer/a relevant video to predict the content, listening to a song, discussing pictures/videos to elicit relevant information and asking the students to narrate their own stories related to what they understood from the title.

While reading the stories, the teachers used one or more of the following approaches: vocabulary games (e.g. hangman) to elicit a relevant concept/character/feeling, drawing and coloring the main characters of the story, selecting the key words from the story, exploring the moral lessons of the stories and gesturing.

After reading the stories, the students were asked to paraphrase each story in their own way, to imagine another ending, or to play the role of the main characters.

When the program began, the students were hesitant to learn English as a second language, but when they started to connect with the pictures in the stories and the English alphabet, they became more comfortable. The teachers used body language, illustrations and simple language while teaching. By the end of the project, the students started to link the stories to their daily life by telling their own similar stories and, most of the time, there were positive influences among students.

Teachers' adaptability

The main challenge for the teachers was the diversity in the classes in terms of age of the students, education level, learning style, and diverse cultural backgrounds. Throughout the project, the EA supported the teachers to adapt their teaching methodologies and to moderate each individual student's strengths and weaknesses, *"The project influenced my teaching experience positively; now I can handle many tasks together, also I can deal with different students no matter what the difference among them is. The training workshops were very beneficial for the targeted project"*¹.

Being flexible in making these changes and adjustments was challenging for the teachers but they succeeded by using a variety of instructional methods that they felt comfortable with such as interactive lectures, problem-based learning, cooperative groups, and multiple intelligences approaches: *"Some students in class had difficulties in reading so I gave them extra time and more care."*²

The monitoring process was based on the reports from the field visit looking at five main indicators of effective teaching: lessons, design, students' progress, positive environment between students coming from different backgrounds (geographical and cultural) and the level of collaboration and commitments in sending the reports on time. The EA noticed that the teachers were extremely caring for their students and demonstrated effectiveness with the full range of student abilities in their classrooms, regardless of the academic diversity of the students, and especially between the Lebanese and Syrians. As one teacher reported, *"When I started teaching this class, I had problems trying to cope with the children, most of them having very little or no English skills; some were not even able to hold a pencil properly. But thanks to their beautiful souls, things have started to change, where the children told me that it was like a dream come true to have a place to learn English. Therefore, their poor level of English started to improve, even if it was slow. They are now able to write the alphabet and are very eager to learn and improve their vocabulary"*³.

¹ Teachers Final Evaluation Survey – Saida, South Lebanon

² Teachers Final Evaluation Survey – Miyeh w Miyeh, South Lebanon

³ Teachers Final Evaluation Survey – Mina, Tripoli

Curriculum and Age

There was a large age gap between the children: 6 to 11 year olds, which translated into a five-year age difference. The teachers reported that the older students were more interactive and responsive than the younger ones. That could be explained by the fact that the older children have a higher cognitive comprehensive level than the younger ones, and they were able to better understand the themes behind the stories than the younger children. The teachers also reported that there was a difference between some children of the same age, explaining that some children were exposed to the English language before attending the project's sessions, while others came for the first time. Additionally, within the same age groups, there may have also been varied cognitive comprehensive levels as well, which could also be reflected by the children's previous exposure to education, background, nationality, and other environmental factors.

Attendance

As per the program's design, 24 children, 50% Lebanese and 50% Syrians, were supposed to attend each English class. Maintaining the attendance up to these figures proved challenging in several areas. It is notable that the ratio between Lebanese and Syrian students was well balanced throughout the project (although slightly less in the South) with an average of 42% Lebanese students for 53% Syrian and 5% Palestinian students.

Total Participation Average per Region

	Lebanese	%	Syrian	%	Palestinian	%	Total
North	9.5	52	8.5	47	0.2	1	18.2
South	4.7	30	9.9	62	1.3	8	15.9
Bekaa	6.9	42	8.4	51	1.1	7	16.4
Average	7	42	8.9	53	0.8	5	16.8

An average of 24 students per class initially registered for the English sessions, however with time, the figures decreased to reach a total average of 16.8 students per class over the course of the project.

The main challenges in sustaining the attendance and ensuring the retention of the students were identified as follows:

- ✓ First, in February 2015, all the centers faced a high number of Syrian children who dropped out from the formal education system as a result of the start of the afternoon shift of the UNHCR education program. For example, in December 2014, the number of Syrian students in Saida center was 14 and after the afternoon shift started, there were seven Syrian students left.
- ✓ Second, it was challenging to accommodate the schedules to reach both Lebanese and Syrian students equally. The Lebanese children usually finished school around 2 or 3 pm, leaving them no time for their studies and homework. Meanwhile, the Syrians had school in the afternoon, making it difficult for them to attend all of the sessions. .
- ✓ Third, cold weather and snow in the Bekaa, especially during the winter blocked the roads for 10 consecutive days, preventing some classes from operating normally. Moreover, some classes did not have any heating system, which made it even more challenging during the cold months of the project.

Consequently, a series of meeting between the PC, the EA and the focal points for the different partners were held to recruit new students among the Syrian children unregistered in the formal afternoon education program. After meeting with each of the Bekaa and Akkar focal points, the EA highlighted the importance of engaging these out-of-school children, as the project provides them with the chance to interact with their peers and to learn a new language through interesting topics around social coexistence and acceptance.

Pedagogy and English skills improvement

As previously mentioned, the participation and interaction of students was promoted by using appropriate teaching methodology. Moreover, the type of activities were adjusted in order to address all class learning styles (visual, auditory and kinesthetic) with the support of visual materials in the class.

The students learned many English words (months of the year, days of the week, animals' name) and expressions. The observation sheets filled by the teachers four times over six months of implementation show how the pupils improved their skills. Specific examples of linguistic skills improvement includes: being able to use English to express themselves, speaking about a picture using English words and comprehending the main ideas in a story told in English.

The learning capacities increased every week, as the stories became longer and more complex. It was also helpful to reserve a portion of the classroom for displaying students' work, because when students saw their own learning experiments and successes publicly displayed, they felt a unique sense of pride and ownership, and this further developed a sense of community and engagement in the classroom.

Based on the observation sheet filled by the teachers for each student in the 25 centers, major improvements were noted for the following specific skills: recognizing, pronouncing and using simple English words; describing a picture using English words; using English to express themselves; telling about a picture using English words and role play the stories.

Average percentage of students' improvement in English language skills (based on a sample of 14 locations)

Center	Percentage of students who demonstrate command of the main English skills - December 2014	Percentage of students who demonstrate command of the main English skills – May 2015
Qobb Elias	15.4	37.3
Marj	36.8	41.6
Riyak	19.9	66.1
Ras Baalback	21.8	50.5
Baalbeck	11.1	51.2
Terdebba	36.4	59.3
Saida	21	27.1
Al Mina	18.5	54.9
Qobbe	11.8	54.7
Bebneen	15	57.3
Berqayel	15.4	57.2
Machha	10.4	27.1
Talhayat	57.1	100
Tabbaneh	17	24.6
Average	21.9	50.6

As shown in the table above, the students showed a noticeable improvement in English language in the three regions with an **overall increase of 28.7%**.

More details regarding students' improvement in the specific skills by the end of the project include:

- 95% of the students were always able to recognize, pronounce and use simple English words (i.e. cat, dog, house, tree, etc.);
- 87% of the students were always able to talk about a picture using English words;
- 70% were often able to comprehend main ideas in a story and role play the story that was read;
- 35% were able to retell the story using vocabulary learned;
- 14% always use English to express himself/herself; and
- 12% of the students were able to describe a picture using English sentences (which represents the most advanced stage of the learning process).

The fact that the children often have challenging life circumstances requires the patience of the teacher and smooth cooperation between the teacher and partner focal point on one side, and with the project team on the other in order to reach the most progress despite the diversity of the children in the classroom: *"Concerning the level of students, I always divide them into groups containing low and high achievers and ask them to communicate and help each other. By the end of the project, this strategy was really beneficial, and the students broke down the discrimination barriers in the class."*¹

Conflict transformation skills improvement

As the project started, a lot of challenges arose due to the prejudices prevailing between the children from different nationalities, as well as due to the very low level of education of some of the children. The following story shared by a teacher illustrates the changes that occurred thanks to the project:

"Last week, ten new Syrian kids arrived in the class, and these kids live in a camp, they did not look organized and they said they attend a school in a tent. One of the Lebanese kids, Mariya, told me that she doesn't want to sit next to them, because they are "Syrians" and they don't look organized and clean. So, I divided the class into four groups, each had both Lebanese and Syrians. I made them draw something related to what they do when they are sick and not able to go to school (A post reading activity for the Amos McGee story). Each child presented his or her drawing to the class. Afterwards, I explained to the new kids the purpose behind the Rainbow of Hope project: "Learning how to maintain love and peace between the Lebanese and Syrians through learning English skills that are conveyed in valuable English stories." The next day, Mariya asked me if she can sit next to a Syrian girl she enjoyed drawing with the day before. This is a simple story, but it means a lot to me, for I am personally sick of the hate that is being spread around in Lebanon, and I am grateful to this project for minimizing hate, misunderstanding, and stereotypes".

After weeks of learning to listen to each other, knowing about each other's lives outside the class, and through the concepts embedded in the stories, students were taught the rights and responsibilities of individuals, such as listening politely, identifying the problem, brainstorming solutions, agreeing on a solution, avoiding win/lose situations, always trying for win/win situations and respecting the rights and values of others. Therefore, they started to use effectively the "I" messages to identify what a person is feeling and why, without blaming; such as, "I am mad that my toy is broken," rather than, "I hate that you broke my toy!"

¹ Teachers Final Evaluation Survey – Terdebbba, South

Moreover, they were able to become one group, to use non-violent communication skills, to prove acceptance and respect to the other and demonstrate empathy. For example, at Tell Hayet center, during the winter, the Lebanese participants offered their Syrian friends blankets to feel warm during the storm.

Furthermore, the “Kelso’s choice” tool had a very positive impact on the behavior of participating children because it supported the teachers’ need to address the message of identifying potential problems or conflicts in everyday events, describing the decision-making process for resolving (rather than escalating) a problem and using constructive conflict management behaviors in school to become more able to solve their own problems in a non-violent manner: “*Karim does not like sharing his toys with the other students. However, he came to me once, after explaining Kelso’s Choice, and he told me “you know, I like Kelso the frog, I will try to share my toys with others and see what happens.”*¹

Based on the teachers’ individual observations, below are the aggregated average percentage of students’ improvement in the range of conflict transformation skills (i.e. approaches others with positive intentions, asks teacher/adult to act as mediator when facing a conflict, interacts positively with children from different nationality, understands and respects others’ rights) during the 6 months of the program.

Average percentage of students’ improvement in Conflict transformation language skills (based on a sample of 14 locations)

Center	Percentage of students who demonstrate command of the main Conflict transformation skills - December 2014	Percentage of students who demonstrate command of the main Conflict transformation skills - May 2015
Qobb Elias	26.5	45
Marj	40.6	44.8
Riyak	26.5	45
Ras Baalback	1.7	31.8
Baalbeck	3.5	30.4
Terdebba	36.4	59.3
Saida	55.4	80
Al Mina	21.2	83.8
Qobbe	21.2	83.8
Bebneen	2.7	23.2
Berqayel	4.4	13.1
Machha	8.6	26
Talhayat	86.5	95.6
Tabbaneh	51.6	98.6
Average	27.6	54.3

As shown in the table, the students showed a noticeable improvement in conflict transformation skills in the three regions with an **overall increase of 26.7%**.

Students also improved in the following skills by the end of the project:

- 93% of the students had positive interactions with children from different nationalities;
- 82% of the students always approached others with positive intentions;
- 61% of the students were able to listen to others even if he/she disagrees; and
- 29% of the students understand and respect others’ rights, especially to learn and have fun.

¹ Teachers Final Evaluation Survey – Talhayat, North Lebanon

Based on the field visit reports, interviews with teachers and students, the observation sheet, and observation by the PC and EA during the final events, the students seemed to enjoy the classes; they were very enthusiastic, happy and motivated. In the beginning of the program, the students' reactions to conflict were mainly to either run away or to fight. This is mainly because they were unaware of other methods that can be used to successfully and positively resolve a conflict. By the end of the program, and with the major commitment of the teachers, however, the students felt understood, nurtured, and supported. For example, in Ras Baalbeck, the average grasp of conflict transformation skills changed from 1.7 to 31.8 percent and in Baalbeck from 3.5 to 30.4 percent: *"I think that the English curriculum was adapted to promote social cohesion among my pupils; and that through the moral themes they have learned from stories; for example, "empathy" taught them to be kind, merciful, and helpful in dealing between themselves; saying "sorry" taught them to apologize easily when making or saying something terrible. Their behavior became less aggressive, more patient and self-confident."*¹

b. Recreational Activities

Attendance

The analysis of the attendance sheets showed that an average of 39 participants in each center attended the recreational activities. The PC conducted phone interviews with 10 randomly selected animators about their evaluation of their experience with RoH. During these interviews, the animators stated that, out of the full group, an average of 12 children attended both the recreational as well as the English sessions. 53,8% of the participants were Syrians, 35.9% were Lebanese, and 10.3% were Palestinians. The table below shows the demographics of the participants in all 3 areas.

Total Participation Average per Region

	Lebanese	%	Syrians	%	Palestinians	%	Total
North	25.1	56.5	15.9	35.8	3.4	7.7	44.4
South	5.8	14.9	24.1	62.4	8.8	22.5	38.7
Bekaa	10.9	32.3	22.8	67.7	0	0	33.7
Average	13.9	35.9	20.9	53.8	4.1	10.3	38.9

The interactions between the children

The RoH animators reported monthly to SFCG based on a template developed to support the assessment of the changes happening through the project. The template included a quantitative Likert scale asking the animators to rate the quality of interactions among children (from 1 – Children having very negative interactions, to 5 – Children having very positive interactions).

The Bekaa centers showed the greatest improvement in the quality of children's interactions, with an increase in 0.8 between the beginning and the end of the project. The North showed a 0.2 improvement, while the score in the South remained the same.

¹ Teachers Final Evaluation Survey – Ras Baalbek, Bekaa

Quality of children interactions between the beginning and the end of the project

	December 2014	May 2015	Difference
North	4.4	4.6	+ 0.2
South	3.8	3.8	0
Bekaa	3.8	4.6	+ 0.8
Total Average	4	4.3	+ 0.3

In the South, although the quality of interaction between the children remained quite challenging, the team noticed, after cross referencing the results with the animators' monthly reporting, that there was an improvement in the behavior of the children. For example, in Saida, the animators mentioned in their first monthly report, in December 2014, *"The majority of the kids interacted positively but there were some negative reactions in terms of racism toward the other or lack of interaction."* Then in January, *"The majority of kids have improved but some are not communicating with younger kids."* While in February, *"The kids are showing their respect toward each other and enthusiasm and participation in activities that increases their trust."* And March, *"The kids show confidence and enthusiasm in participating in the activities that aim on building trust and connection between them."* Lastly, April's report mentioned that the majority of the children were interacting positively.

The animators also shared, in the phone interview with the PC, that there were clear signs of behavioral differences between the children attending both the English and the animation sessions and those who only attended the weekend sessions, *"I saw a clear difference between the children that attended both sessions, and those that only attended the recreational ones. The students who also attended the English sessions, they were more patient and understanding of each other. They participated more than the others, tried to include each other in the activities, and they made more of an effort to solve their arguments using the tools we provided them with, such as Kelso's Choice."*¹

This also shows in the 0.4 reduction of violent incidents between the children in all three areas (on a scale from 1- 0 incidents in the last month, 2- 1 to 5 incidents, 3- 6 to 10 incidents and 4- more than 10); demonstrating the effect of the conflict transformation methods being taught to the children.

Number of violent incidents (verbal or physical) among the participating children per month and per region

	December 2014	May 2015	Difference
North	2	1.5	- 0.5
South	2	1.8	- 0.2
Bekaa	2.5	2	- 0.5
Total Average	2.2	1.8	- 0.4

¹ Animators Final Evaluation Interviews - North

Some animators reported a higher level of tension between Syrian and Lebanese children in the Bekaa area than in other areas. That might be due to the fact that the Bekaa Valley holds the biggest concentration of refugees in the country. They also noticed that children from both nationalities were holding prejudices against the other, mainly repeating what they heard from their parents and making comments during the activities such as, *“I don’t want to sit next to a Syrian, my mom does not allow me sit next to them,”* or, *“Lebanese think they are better than us.”*¹

The average form of violence seen in all three areas was mostly verbal (talking down to others, bullying, racist behaviors, swearing). However, the North animators reported more physical violence incidents than the other areas (kicking, fighting, pushing, etc.).

It is also worth mentioning a gender-based incident that occurred in Saida and demonstrates certain patriarchal behaviors between the children that the animators tried to address. Often the girls were told to be quiet and not allowed to speak. However, the animators intervened and discussed with the boys and girls the importance of respecting each other and equality. Even though the animators saw a difference in the boys’ behavior, this remained a challenge that could not be completely overcome, due to traditional norms and values in some places.

Conflict transformation skills improvement

In their monthly reports, the animators were also asked to rate the ability of the children to deal positively with conflicts (on a scale from 1 – not at all, to 5 – totally).

Children’s improvement in their ability to positively deal with conflicts

	December 2014	May 2015	Difference
North	3.6	3.8	+ 0.2
South	4	4.3	+ 0.3
Bekaa	3.3	4.3	+ 1
Total Average	3.6	4.1	+ 0.5

While it was mentioned earlier that the Bekaa was witnessing the highest number of tensions among the participating children, the results have shown that the same centers also had the most positive changes in comparison to the other areas with +1 increase in the way the children deal with conflict. The average of all areas shows an increase of 0.5 by the end of the project. This shows that the sessions have given the children new tools to deal with their conflicts.

An example of this is a verbal exchange that occurred in the North, when a new Lebanese girl condemned a Syrian girl, saying that, *“You are bad people and don’t deserve the help you are getting.”* The Syrian girl replied that, *“We’re all humans and should love each other.”* During the incident, the animator came in and discussed the matter with both students, reminding them of the theme of the book, *“It’s ok to be different, and how even though they might be different, however everyone is equal.”* The Lebanese girl apologized and, in later sessions, the animators noticed some improvement.²

¹ Animators Final Evaluation Interviews - Bekaa

² Animators Final Evaluation Interviews - North



As months passed, the children began taking a different approach to conflict and their attitude toward each other changed. They were less prone to violent behaviors by the end of the project. After time participating in the sessions, they began avoiding conflicts, and finally got to a point of attempting to talk them through, and to understanding the other side's perspective. They also participated more in the activities, and were more accepting and friendly to the others. The animators noted that the children often came from

difficult social backgrounds, and needed special care and attention. Doing so created a trusting relationship between them and the children, making the kids more receptive to instructions to looking to the animators for guidance. The children from the English sessions have also used the Kelso's Choice approach in the recreational activities to talk through some of their issues.

Animators' confidence in their ability to promote conflict transformation skills among the children

The trainings for the animators aimed to provide them with the skills and tools needed to foster conflict transformation principles in their animation work. While at the onset of the training, only 13% of the participants felt that they had a high level of understanding of different animation techniques, 76% felt highly confident about such capacities at the end of the workshop, showing a clear boost in their self-confidence and in the skills they acquired during the training. Moreover, their level of confidence to promote conflict transformation principles in their work with children increased from 53% initially to 87% after the training.

In their monthly reports, they were also asked to rate their ability to promote conflict transformation skills among the children (on a scale from 1 – not at all, to 5 – totally).

Animators' level of confidence in their ability to promote conflict transformation skills among the children

	December 2014	May 2015	Difference
North	4.3	4.3	0
South	4.3	4.5	+ 0.2
Bekaa	4.3	4.5	+ 0.2
Total Average	4.3	4.4	+ 0.1

Since the beginning of the project and in all regions, the animators demonstrated a high level of confidence. According to the questions asked to the animators during the evaluation, most of them felt that their animation skills as well as their conflict transformation skills have improved since they began working with the

Rainbow of Hope. They felt that the trainings were helpful to give them new tools. As they went through the sessions, some of the animators began researching online and sharing their animation techniques on the Facebook platform; they also asked for guidance from the other animators. They began preparing the materials beforehand, and were satisfied with the fact that by the end of the project they had been able to improve their animation as well as their conflict transformation skills.

The animators worked toward raising awareness among the children of conflict transformation and mutual respect. They began diversifying the activities they led with the children, and finding new ones to reach the project's objectives. For example, they mixed the children in different groups so that they could get used to each other. In some areas, especially in the South, they tried to find culturally acceptable activities to break the gender barriers. Moreover, after the refresher day, they began including the children in the planning of activities, in a participatory approach. Some animators even stated that they adapted conflict transformation principles into their personal life, trying to understand people instead of reacting to them. One animator shared that he started empathizing with the Syrians for the first time, and that he began to have an idea of what they are going through and became more understanding with them: *"When I first started, I dealt with everyone the same, I did not take into consideration that they come from different backgrounds. Once I became more experienced, I learned from my mistakes, and began taking their background and how to better deal with each person."*¹

C. Partnerships:

SFCG worked with several partners in different areas on this program, mentioned earlier in the background and context section. The partners helped in the mobilization and logistics needs of the project and maintained a regular oral and written reporting with the PC and a constant follow-up with the animators and teachers. To ensure commitment and accountability, a regular system for financial and narrative reporting was put in place and contracts were signed with each partner (contrary to the previous year). However, most partners are small NGOs with weak organizational and financial capacities. This resulted in a continuous need for capacity building and follow-up by project staff as well as SFCG finance and program team.

SFCG developed and maintained clear lines of communication with Utopia, Hadatha, Sada al Bekaa, Nabad, Shajar w Bashar. The team faced some challenges with USpeak. The organization sent their reports irregularly; the team had difficulty communicating clearly with them. The founder of the NGO, Rawan, was abroad working on her graduate degree, which made it more difficult to include her in the discussion when a challenge arose with the assigned focal point. The organization went on a strike for a month, while a financial obstacle took time to be resolved. That, in turn, delayed the progress of their sessions and their teachers and animators missed the refreshers training. By the end of the project, the relationship improved between the two organizations, and clearer communication was established.

These challenges emerged due to the highly demanding financial aspects of the project, related to oversight and compliance of partners finance and reporting. The project budget covered only a minimal percentage of staff in the Administration and Finance Department which made it difficult to hire a part-time assistant to help the already fully-booked SFCG Finance Officer in the RoH partners' oversight. The SFCG Program Team (PC,

¹ Animators Final Evaluation Interviews - North

Projects Manager, and Program Director) ended up doing most of the financial work in order to keep the project operational.

The team also faced communication difficulties with Salam on a number of occasions. They sent their documentation late, were not responsive to communications efforts made by SFCG, and some of their focal points were not cooperative or efficient in completing the task agreed upon. We also faced some difficulties with their teachers and animators. During the Bekaa final event, a high number of the participants brought by Salam were not students from the class, as we discovered while checking the attendance sheets.

However, two of SFCG's partners, Utopia and Sada al Bekaa, shared in an oral debrief with the PC that the coordination, communication, and implementation of the project had improved immensely in comparison to the beginning of the project, and last year's project implemented by another organization. The Utopia focal point shared, *"I did not expect things to turn out to be that organized. We were included in the planning process for the Final Events, and there was constant communication between SFCG and us."* Meanwhile, Sada al Bekaa shared, *"This year's organization and implementation of the project was in general better than last year; there were some challenges that arose, which made things a bit difficult, however, the constant communication from both sides, made things possible to solve."*

D. Final Event:

The final events were well organized and the partners shared their satisfaction with the participatory methods used to plan it. It was a great opportunity to observe the achievements of the project, where the children performed on stage and played together, interacting during the games, and using English words with confidence.

On May 31, the month concluded with the first of the three final regional events. Held at Miyye w Miyye Public School in Saida (South Lebanon), the regional event engaged over 150 people, including Lebanese and Syrian children and their families. The success of this first regional event in Saida established an important precedent for the project, which was replicated in the last two final events in the Bekaa and in the North. On Sunday, June 7, over 175 participants attended the second regional event, held in Mountada al Mouaawakin, Tripoli for the North. On Friday, June 12, approximately 170 people attended the final regional event for the Bekaa, held in Joseph Tohme Skaff Park in Zahle.

Parents at the event were extremely supportive, and expressed a strong sense of pride in the accomplishments of their children; one Syrian refugee remarked that the source of her pride was that her children had the opportunity to learn English, when she did not. This pride was only surpassed by the enthusiasm and self-confidence that the children themselves showed throughout the final events. The recreational design of the events provided a safe space for children,



especially those living in informal camps, to enjoy educational and artistic activities, reinforce the relationships developed between the Lebanese and Syrian children throughout the courses, and to demonstrate their accomplishments to family and community members in attendance.

5. Recommendations

The final evaluation enabled SFCG to reflect upon the project's design, implementation, and assess the results of the project's challenges to develop concrete recommendations for enhancing the project in the future. Search for Common Ground thanks the U.S. Embassy for their valuable support for this project, and looks forward to potential opportunities to continue the Rainbow of Hope project in the future. Search for Common Ground's final recommendations based on the evaluation are as follows:

Teachers' and Animators Capacity Building

The SFCG EA met with the trainer after the first training and it was agreed that the sessions in the second training should stress building skills for conflict transformation and use real situations that arise in classrooms, playgrounds and communities as concrete examples for teaching conflict transformation. In addition, it was agreed that equipping teachers with skills needed to promote the acceptance of differences and tips for anger management was important. Therefore, in the second training, the trainer worked more on practical techniques on how to possibly solve conflicts peacefully. He used a mediation approach to do so.

Nonetheless, the budget and time allocated to the capacity building of the teachers did not allow to fully equip them with skills to promote the acceptance of differences or how to deal with anger. All teachers mentioned their eagerness for more conflict transformation capacity building which should be taken into account in a possible renewal of the project.

Through the final evaluation surveys, the EA also asked the teachers to think of professional development needs and indicate to which extent they would need more capacity building/support in specific areas. After analyzing their answers, the EA noticed a common need to ensure an effective development and better results for next program. The main areas of development noted by the teachers are: how to embed conflict transformation principles as a teacher, classroom management, child protection, and teaching in multicultural setting, different teaching methods, and teaching students with special learning needs.

Furthermore, a focused effort is required to build capacities in teaching literacy and particularly reading skills, for example in the teaching of phonics, testing and checking reading comprehension, and how to deal with conflict transformation between students.

Moreover, hiring experts on conflict transformation in schools would be useful in the future in order to support the teachers in applying the scenarios from the stories to teach peaceful conflict management to their pupils.

On the animators' side, many of them suggested a partnership with the NGO Right to Play¹ could be more beneficial in terms of animators' capacity building, given that they are specialized in animation, and they are providing trainings related to conflict transformation. The NGO could also provide on-going coaching through the Facebook group.

¹ <http://www.righttoplay.com/>

English curriculum

The EA reviewed the content of 18 books used during the project and she compared them with the feedback of the teachers based on the questions to identify if those books are suitable to the age range targeted by the project, to the local culture, to teach English to Arabic native speakers and to teach conflict transformation skills to children.

Some of the stories were not convenient for the kids' ages, and especially because the kids are not English native speakers and some of the stories contain a lot of different and uncommon English words that only native speakers use. In addition, some of the stories contain difficult words and terms such as the "Owl Moon" and "The Little Engine". Seven teachers out of the 11 who completed the email survey asked to change "Owl Moon" and "The Little Engine" if there will be a continuation to the project. Two teachers also did not relate the "Creepy Carrots" and "Love Forever" books to conflict transformation.

Therefore, here is a list of the highly recommended books, and less recommended books for a potential future project, along with suggestions for some books which were not used, but could be in the future.

Review of the Curriculum

Highly Recommended	Not Frequently Recommended	Potential Future Options
The Lion and the Mouse	Someday	Peter's Chair
Gallop	Big Mean Mike	Paths of Peace
Caps for Sale	Love Forever	The Three Questions
The Way Back Home	Creepy Carrots	Have You Filled a Bucket Today?
Little Red Hen	Owl Moon	The Way Back Home
Z is for Moose	The Little Engine	
The Other Side		
Rainbow Fish		
A Sick Day for Amos		
Art and Max		
The Little House		
It's Okay To Be Different		

Teachers' Selection

The EA especially recommends nine teachers based on their abilities to identify and select different instructional resources and methods to meet students' varying needs, to instruct and monitor students in the use of learning materials and equipment, to encourage and monitor the progress of individual students, to maintain accurate and complete records of students' progress and development, and to provide appropriate feedback.

The 9 teachers are: Bassel Qussane, Adelle Dayshoum, Safaa el Khatib, Mona Riyah, Kawthar Sati, Roham Saleh, Haneen Zeidan, Hiba AL Ghanem, and Mohammad Khalaf.

Educational Material

Through the surveys, the EA also asked the teachers about the materials they could have used to improve the quality of learning in classes. The materials identified were printers and sound speakers, an English Alphabet board, a projector and screen, and pedagogical games. In particular, sound speakers would help the students to properly listen and interact positively with the content of songs and stories, and a projector and screen would be helpful given the difficulties of 24 students watching a video together on a computer screen.

On the same side, the animators mentioned several times the need for more outdoor spaces as the children need space to play and interact better when playing outside. Thus, the RoH team recommends putting more efforts into holding activities outdoors in open spaces in the future.

Children profile, Attendance and Retention

The RoH team believes that it is important to follow up with focal points on the recruitment of new children for the English class, especially Syrians not registered in the formal education program.

It is also important to keep following up with teachers on the class environment and attendance rates in order to ensure better retention. Therefore, it is highly recommended to implement the English classes four times a week, for an hour and 15 minutes instead of five times a week for one hour every day. This scheduling would also allow the teachers to not have to rush through the stories and be able to conduct more in-depth activities.

In order to increase the project's results, it is also recommended to work with a smaller number of students, ranging from 15 to a maximum of 20, and to limit the age range to 9 to 12 years old instead of accepting the students aged between 6 and 12. This would ensure more homogeneity within the group and allow teachers to have more time dedicated to helping individual students throughout the classrooms. It would also address one of the major challenges that teachers faced throughout the project – which is how to address the different intellectual needs of the students given their different learning capacities, as reflected by their age differences.

Limiting the number of children in the animation sessions is also recommended in order to enable the animators to better facilitate their involvement and ensure that the children are fully engaged and active during the activities. Moreover, as it was noticed that the children also attending the English classes were benefiting more from the recreational activities, it is recommended to conduct the weekend animations with this specific group and to not introduce external children. This would ensure continuity and a more cohesive

group, both from the perspective of the animators and teachers. Finally, it would be important to keep on-going monitoring to ensure the number of students in the recreational activities is the same as the number of students in the English sessions.

Moreover, appropriate follow-up from teachers, animators and partners' focal points on students' attendance is critical. The more the students were required and encouraged to attend the class, the better the group improved overall. If a student missed the class frequently, that student was less likely to benefit from this program, and this also impacted the group as a whole, as the teacher had to adjust to what he/she missed. Therefore, the impact of a strong attendance policy would be significant and serve to decrease the likelihood of students being absent.

Parental Engagement

The RoH team believes that parents from different nationalities and backgrounds can come together in strong, united communities if we encourage and support them to share their aspirations and experiences, and have a strong sense of mutual commitment. Engaging the parents was quite challenging during the project as the budget did not allow for extra activities. Nonetheless, several discussions took place with the teachers on possible ways to, at least, engage the parents in their children's learning processes through, for example, simple homework assignments where the children would have to ask their parents questions and discuss their answers in class.

Nonetheless, to reach the objective of improving social stability at the community level, it is recommended to implement bi-monthly meetings for parents and students outside the classrooms. This could be developed into workshops about daily life issues (health, environment, education), or joint activities for parents such as traditional lunches or attending a show prepared by the children.

Partnership

Strong partners are crucial in the implementation of such a project. SFCG worked very successfully with Sada al Bekaa, Nabad, Utopia, Hadatha, and Chajar w Bashar. These partners excelled at maintaining contact and communication with SFCG, had excellent teachers and animators, and demonstrated the capacity to carry out the project to the level of quality expected. On the other hand, the partnership with Salam (in the Bekaa and in the South) has been quite challenging (lack of transparency, absence of proper follow-up with their teachers and animators, unresponsive to SFCG requests and lack of motivation to implement the project).

For a potential future project, therefore, SFCG suggests the following breakdown for 15 project centers:

- Sada al Bekaa: Three Locations (Taanayel, Joub Jounine, Kamad el Loz),
- Nabad: Two Locations (Riyak + one to be determined),
- Utopia: Two Locations (Qobbe, Al-Mina),
- Hadatha: Three Locations (To be determined),
- Chajar w Bashar: Three Locations (one in Saida, two in Miye w Miye), and
- SFCG South office: Two Locations (Ter Deba+ one to be determined).

Overall Approach

For these 15 centers, SFCG recommends having the same 20 children in both English-language and recreational sessions. SFCG recommends having a detailed orientation with the partners, animators, and teachers to establish clear expectations about the documentation required of them for monitoring and evaluation, budgeting appropriately, and other administrative aspects of the project (especially partners finance capacity building and follow-up).

Search for Common Ground also recommends budgeting more for the financial and monitoring and evaluation support needed for the project. Doing so would enable more thorough and consistent reporting.

Moreover, the final events were seen to be an outstanding success, and a reward for the children to feel accomplished and proud of their hard work throughout the project. To ensure that the final events will successfully capture the enthusiasm and work of the children, teachers, and animators throughout the project, SFCG recommends that the teachers and animators begin preparing for the final events from the beginning of their sessions, so that the event will be ready well in advance.

The Rainbow of Hope final events were a unique and celebratory culmination to the project's achievements, which had lasting impacts on children, their parents, teachers, and communities as well. SFCG's participatory approach to planning the events focused directly on engaging the children and targeting their needs and interests. To hear that one child called being picked up by the bus was the 'highlight of her day' demonstrates the impact of the program overall; a welcoming environment between Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian students; and the ability of the teachers to make the learning process enjoyable.

Annexes

List of the centers and their locations

	District	Caza	Area	Club Location
1	Bekaa	Western Bekaa	Qobb Elias	Cultural Center
2			Taanayel	Salam Center
3			Kamed el Loz	Public School
4			El Marj	Scout Center
5			Joub Jannine	Community Center
6			Joub Jannine 2	Community Center 2
7		Zahle	Riyak	Nabad Center
8		Baalbeck	Ras Baalbeck	Ras Baalbeck School
9			Baalbeck	Uspeak Center
10			Baalbeck 2	Uspeak Center
11		Hasbaya	Habbariyye	Local Association Center
12	South	Saida	Saida	SAMA Center
13			Miyye w Miyye	Cultural Center
14			Miyye w Miyye 2	Nebrass Center
15		Tyr	Burj Al-Shamali	Al Sadaka Center
16			Ter Debba	Cultural Center
17		North Lebanon	Tripoli	Al Mina
18	Qobbe			Community Center
19	Abou Samra			Dar Al Zahra
20	Tabbaneh			Utopia Center
21	Akkar		Wadi Jamus	Local Association Center
22			Tell Hayet	Local Association Center
23			Berqayel	Nassij School
24			Machha	Local Association Center
25			Bebnine	Kindergarten

English Curriculum

1. The lion and the mouse
 2. Gallop
 3. Caps for Sale
 4. Love for ever
 5. The three Questions
 6. The way back home
 7. Little red hen
 8. Z is for moose
 9. The other side
 10. Rainbow fish
 11. A sick day for Amos
 12. Art and Max
 13. The little house
 14. The little engine
 15. It's okay to be different
 16. Peter's Chair
 17. Paths of Peace
 18. The three Questions
 19. Have you filled a bucket today?
 20. The way back home
 21. Stone Soup
 22. The Dot
 23. The given tree
 24. Stلالuna
 25. Animalia
- + Kelso's Choice

Animators Monthly Report template

Name	Location	Month
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- Please provide a brief description of the activities carried out during the month.
- a) How would evaluate the interactions between the children in the last month? Choose the statement that reflects the most the general situation:

Children are having very positive interactions
Some children are having positive interactions
Children don't interact a lot
Children are having some negative interactions
Some children are having very negative interactions

b) Please explain your answer.

- Do you see an evolution in the group dynamics? Please explain.
- In the last month, can you give the approximate number of violent incidents (verbal or physical) you noticed among the participating children?

0	1-5	6-10	More than 10
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- Can you describe specific violent incidents that involved kids from different nationalities and how did you handle the situation?
- a) To which extend did you feel comfortable/able to address these incident in a constructive way?

Totally	Somehow	Neutral	Not really	Not at all
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b) Please explain your answer.

- Are there incidents where the children were showing empathy and respect of the other? Please explain.
- a) Do you notice an improvement in the way children deal with conflict?

Totally	Somehow	Neutral	Not really	Not at all
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b) Please explain your answer.

- a) To which extend do you feel confident in your ability to promote conflict transformation skills among the children?

Totally	Somehow	Neutral	Not really	Not at all
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b) Please explain you answer.

- Did you face any challenges in the last month? Please explain.
- Thinking about the main objective of this project which is to bridge gaps between Lebanese and Syrian children, is there any success stories you would like to share?
- Is there anything else you would like to mention or any support you would need?

Animators Final Evaluation Interview Guide

- 1) Are you aware if you had some the English session children attending your recreational sessions?
- 2) Did you see any differences between the children attending both the English and recreational sessions and those that are only attending the recreational one? In the way the different nationalities dealt with each other, expressed themselves, and behaved...
- 3) Did you face any tension between the Syrian and Lebanese children? If yes, did it decrease over time? Did you see any improvement or change?
- 4) Did you feel well equipped to deal with such tension, and how did you deal with it?
- 5) Did you see more signs of empathetic and respectful behavior in the children?
- 6) Do you feel that your way of animation has changed over time? If so how?
- 7) Did you feel that the project allowed you to embed conflict transformation principles? If so how?
- 8) Would you like to participate in the project again, if it was renewed? Why?
- 9) What are the things that you would like to be different about the project?
- 10) What type of capacity building, do you think, will help you better perfume your recreational activities?

Final Evaluation Questionnaire for teachers

Teacher's Name	
Location	
Partner's Name	

Teaching Experience Evaluation

1. Did you use when starting reading a story with children?
2. Please describe what kind of activities did you use while reading a story with children?
3. Please describe what kind of activities did you use after finishing reading a story with children?
4. To which extent do you think your way of teaching has changed through your participation in the project? (1 being not at all and 5 being completely) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Please explain your answer:
5. Did you link the stories to situations your pupils face in their daily life? Yes – No Please explain your answer:
6. Have you been confronted with discriminatory behaviours among your pupils? Yes – No If yes, please provide an example of such situation and how did you deal with it?
7. Have you been confronted with violent behaviours among your pupils? Yes – No If yes, please provide an example of such situation and how did you deal with it?
8. Have you been confronted with slow learners among your pupils? Yes – No If yes, please provide an example of such situation and how did you deal with it?
9. Please read the situation below and answer the question related to it: "You are dividing your pupils into groups to discuss a story you have just read together. Samir, an eight years old Lebanese pupil, refuses to be part of the group assigned to him. He says he does not want to be in the same group as Mounir, a 9 years old Syrian kid who started to attend your class a week ago. Samir is quite aggressive and Mounir starts crying."As a teacher, how do you handle this situation?

11. Share with us some of the materials/teaching methods that you found effective with slow learners or above average students.
12. Share with us some of the materials and supplies you would have needed to improve the results of the project.
13. Share with us some curricular changes you would like to happen, if the project was renewed.
14. In general, how would you rate the books used during the project regarding the following criteria:

	Not at all	Not really	Fairly	Totally
Suitable to teach English to Arabic native speakers				
Suitable to teach conflict transformation skills to children				
Suitable to the local culture				
Suitable to the age range targeted by the project				

15. Is there any book you would recommend to not use anymore if the project was renewed and why?
16. Thinking of your own professional development needs, indicate to which extend you would need more capacity building/support in the following areas:

	Not need at all	Low level of need	Moderate level of need	High level of need	Comments
Different teaching methods					
Student learning style assessment					
Classroom management					
How to embed conflict transformation principles in your work as a teacher					
Teaching students with special learning needs					
To address student discipline and behaviour problems					
Teaching in a multicultural setting					
How to use teaching methods to promote social cohesion					
Student counselling					
Child protection					

Project's Achievements Evaluation

1. Describe, in few words, some of the accomplishments that you feel the most proud of during the project.
2. Share with us, in few words, the improvements you saw in your students (in regards to i.e English skills, behaviour, learning capacities, etc.) Please state the reasons you think are behind this improvement.
3. What do you hope your students will keep with them?
4. To which extent do you think the English curriculum was adapted to promote social cohesion among your pupils? (1 being not at all and 5 being completely) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Please explain your answer and provide example on how you integrated social cohesion within your teaching.
5. To which extent do you think your confidence to promote conflict transformation principles through your work with children has increased through the project? (1 being not at all and 5 being completely) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Please explain your answer:
6. Through the project, did you notice a decrease in violent incidents (verbal or physical) among the participating children?
Yes – No Please explain your answer:

7. To which extent do you think the project helped you to be more able to diffuse conflicts between Lebanese and Syrians pupils in a nonviolent way? (1 being not at all and 5 being completely) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Can you provide specific example(s)?

8. To which extent your Lebanese and Syrian pupils have shown respectful and empathic relationships with one another?(1 being not at all and 5 being completely) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 . Can you provide specific example(s)?

9. To which extent the interactions between your Lebanese and Syrians pupils have change through the lifetime of the project? (tick the appropriate box for the beginning and for the end of the project)

Relations at the beginning of the project					Relations at the end of the project				
Very negative	Somehow negative	Neutral	Somehow positive	Very positive	Very negative	Somehow negative	Neutral	Somehow positive	Very positive

10. Can you explain the methods you used to engage the parents of your pupils in the project?

11. Would you have any suggestion to engage more your pupils’ parents in the project, if it was renewed?

12. To which extent your participation in the project has influenced your way of teaching in general (with your other pupils)? (1 being not at all and 5 being completely) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5. Please explain your answer:

English Classes Weekly Plan Template

Teacher’s Name:

Date:

Name of the Book	
Objectives	
Activities	
English skills learnt	
Theme(s)	
Successes	
Issues : (behavioral ,logistics, language)	
Photos	Yes No (If yes attach please)